

MAMCO GENEVA

11.10.17–04.02.18

PRESS KIT

William Leavitt, *Retrospective*

General Idea, *Photographs (1969-1982)*–extended

*Narrative Art*

*Fictional Artists*

Gordon Matta-Clark, *Food*

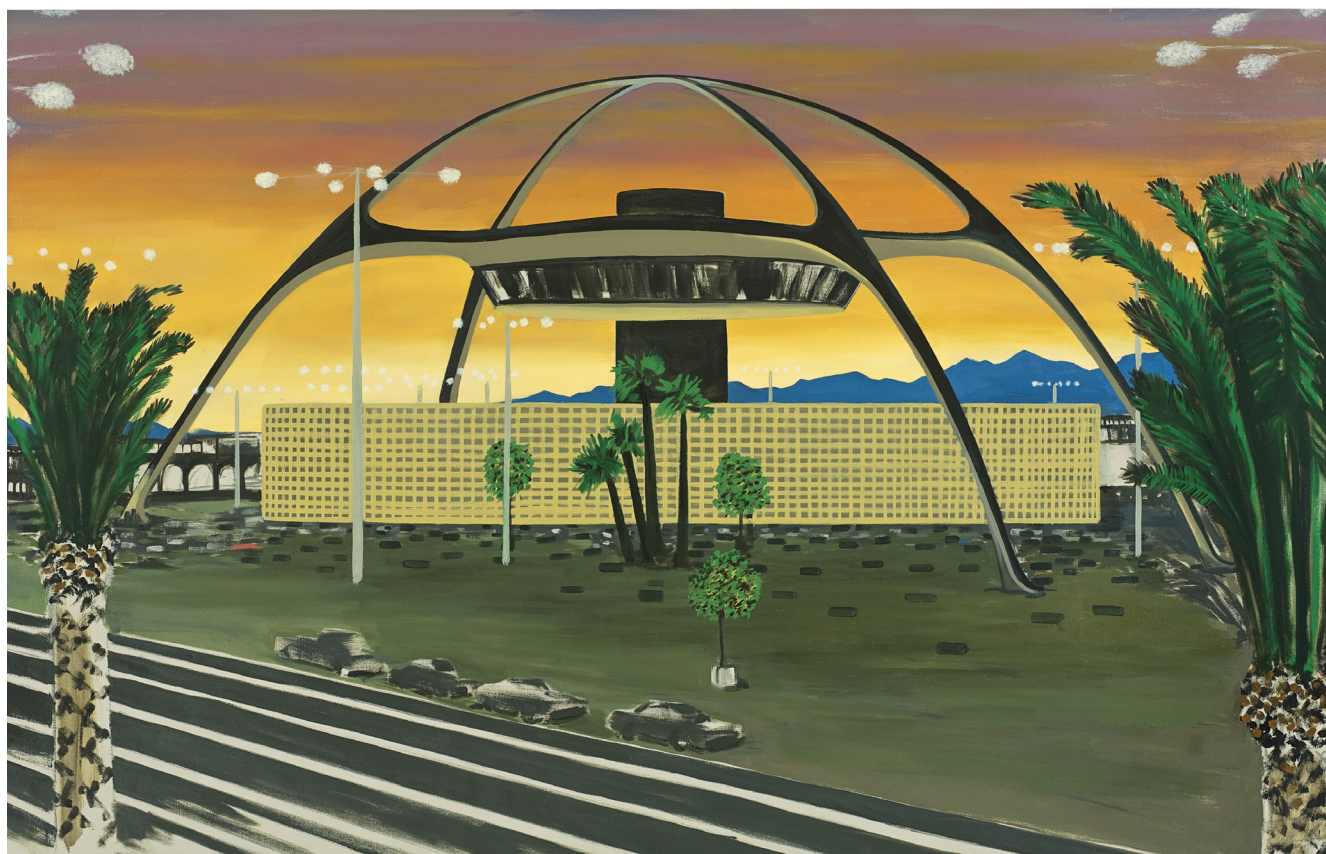
Adrian Piper, *The Mythic Being*

Martha Rosler, *House Beautiful: Bringing the War Home*

Allen Ruppersberg, *The Never Ending Book*

**Opening: Tuesday October 10, 2017 – 6pm**

**10, rue des Vieux-Grenadiers, 1205 Geneva**



William Leavitt, *Theme Restaurant*, 1986.

Oil on canvas. 116,84 × 182,88 cm, Collection Richard S. Massey, Miami (FL)

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# PRESS RELEASE

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**Exhibitions from October 11, 2017 until February 4, 2018**

**Press conference Tuesday October 10, 2017, 11 am**

This fall, MAMCO is organizing the first European retrospective of William Leavitt (born in 1941, Washington, USA), an historic figure of the Los Angeles art scene. Deployed on the entirety of the first floor, this exhibition brings together pieces ranging between 1970 until now. Through his installations, drawings and paintings, play and sound performances, Leavitt re-examines the production of the Western imaginary, as imposed, since the end of WWII, by the "Hollywood factory." Through a selection of parts of stage sets, the isolation and recombination of fragments coming from everyday culture, which often conceals a conservative social order and politics, the artist turns these representations inside out: he makes us see them as conceptual frameworks in which stories (fictional ones or from our own lives) can be set.

This show, organized by Lionel Bovier and Julien Fronsacq, is thus an opportunity to go back over several issues in art history, whether it be the 1970s movement of

"Narrative Art" or the fictional dimension present in the practice of General Idea, whose exhibition is extended until the beginning of February. Narration is also at the heart of a project devoted to fictional artists by David Lemaire, and the ensemble of works by Adrian Piper and Martha Rosler, respectively brought together by Elise Lammer and Sophie Costes.

This sequence is the third phase of a method of investigation into the art of the past decades, inaugurated by *Zeitgeist* in spring, and then continued with the series of exhibitions organized around the retrospective of Kelley Walker in the summer. In this way, MAMCO has been offering, via a system of nested presentations, a prismatic reading of the artistic movements and debates that have traversed our era. This singular museographical proposition, the result of the collective work of the curators of the MAMCO and its associated curators, is itself set in the heritage of the "global exhibition" concept, which has been prevalent in the museum ever since its opening in the 1990s.

# William Leavitt, *Retrospective*

An exhibition organized by  
Lionel Bovier et Julien Fronsacq

This fall, MAMCO is devoting the first European retrospective to William Leavitt (born in 1941, Washington, USA), an historic figure of the Los Angeles art scene. Deployed on the entirety of the first floor, this exhibition brings together pieces ranging between 1970 until now.

As part of the same Californian artistic milieu as Allen Ruppersberg, Guy de Cointet, and Bas Jan Ader—with whom he in particular edited the magazine *Landslide*, presented on the third floor of the museum (in the “office” part of the Apartment)—, Leavitt has developed a singular body of work, on the one hand, participating in Conceptual art (whose some important representatives, such as Douglas Huebler, are based in Los Angeles), and the “Narrative art” movement that emerged in the early 1970s.

The exhibition brings together historic works, installations or photo-compositions, many of which have never been shown in Europe before, paintings, and drawings from the 1980s-1990s, as well as major recent installations. The project has been organized in such a way as to respect the chronological development of the work, while highlighting its thematic resonances, ranging from science-fiction to the notion of decor. It provides the possibility to take in the extent of William Leavitt’s project, to reposition his contribution in the decades he has lived through, and to evaluate the

echoes it continues to have with many artists of new generations.

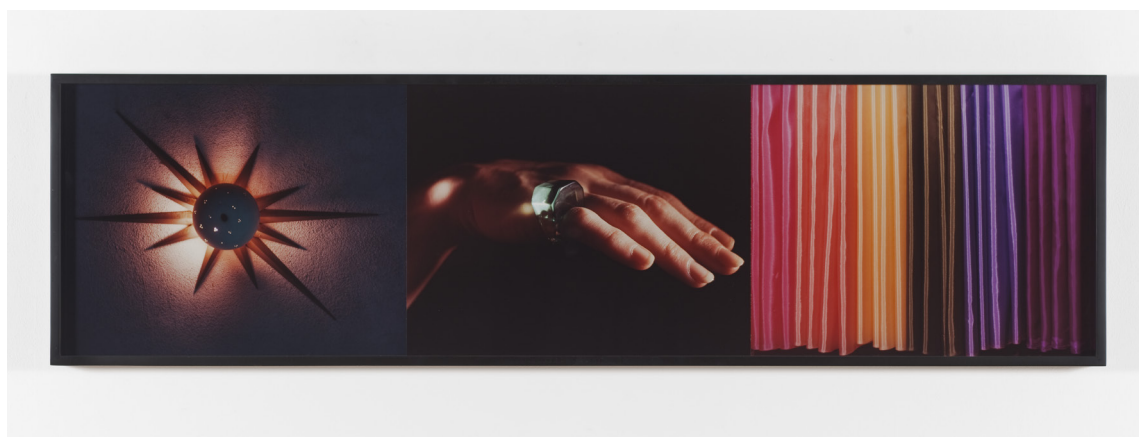
Through his installations, drawings and paintings, play and sound performances, Leavitt thus re-examines the production of the Western imaginary, as imposed, since the end of WWII, by the “Hollywood factory.” Through a selection of parts of stage sets, the isolation and recombination of fragments coming from everyday culture, which often conceals a conservative social order and politics, the artist turns these representations inside out: he makes us see them as so many conceptual frameworks in which stories (fictional ones or from our own lives) can be set.

This exhibition benefits from the support of the Fondation du Jubilé de la Mobilière Suisse Société Coopérative and of the Greene Naftali Gallery, New York.

## William Leavitt, *Retrospective*



William Leavitt, *The Impossible*, 1980. Installation, mixed media  
Court. William Leavitt and Greene Naftali Gallery, New York



William Leavitt, *Spectral Analysis*, 1977. Chromogenic photograph  
42.9 × 154.6 cm. Collection William Leavitt, Los Angeles (CA)

## William Leavitt, *Retrospective*



William Leavitt, *The Tropics*, 1974. Three black and white photographs, text, 40.64 × 152 cm. Court. Marc Selwyn Fine Art, Los Angeles (CA)



William Leavitt, *Solvent Molecule*, 2009. Acrylic on linen canvas, 114 × 177.80 cm. Coll. Bettina Korek, Los Angeles (CA)

# General Idea, *Photographs (1969–1982)* Extended

An exhibition organized by  
Paul Bernard and Lionel Bovier

**Founded by AA Bronson (b. 1946), Jorge Zontal (b. 1944, d. 1994), and Felix Partz (b. 1945, d. 1994), the Canadian collective General Idea produced one of the most striking oeuvre from the 1970s and 1980s. This multiform work took on the glamour of popular images, the ideology of mass media, and the commonplaces spread throughout the art world, always with a strong sense of irony.**

General Idea was founded by the three artists in 1969 in Vancouver when they decided to live and work together. Mindful readers of Marshal McLuhan and Roland Barthes' *Mythologies*, they organized in 1970 a beauty contest to elect a Miss General Idea: a mythological, asexual, faceless, and blurry figure who will become their muse. The following year, they began a 13-year-long fiction, *The 1984 Miss General Idea Pavilion*. Behind this "project," a strange fiction is taking place, like the pieces of a gigantic puzzle that is constantly being redefined.

Stemming from the group's archives, the exhibition at MAMCO, conceived in close collaboration with AA Bronson, tackles the first ten years of their career under the specific angle of photography. The aesthetics of these early works borrows from Minimal, Conceptual, as well as Land art, and the regulars from MAMCO will certainly find an echo to works from Dennis Oppenheim, Franz Erhard Walther, or even Victor Burgin. However these photographs are also documents from the group's life within the context of communitarian utopias which left their mark on the 1960s in Northern America.

From the start—and their beauty contest—photography is their privileged medium which they use to feed their mythology. Following their principle of "form follows fiction," the works produced during this period systematically relate to their muse and her pavilion, through an iconographic repertoire constituted of pieces of clothing and accessories, mirrors, Venetian blinds, or the zigurat pattern.

The exhibition also pays attention to the role of edition within the production and diffusion of these images. *FILE Magazine* thus became one of the most accomplished artists' magazine of its time. Presented by General Idea as a "cultural parasite" appropriating and distorting the famous *LIFE Magazine* (the company eventually sued the collective), this publication featured the group's manifestoes and projects, chronicled the artistic life, and introduced new cultural trends. Throughout their 26 issues, from 1972 to 1989, *FILE* contributed to broaden General Idea's audience beyond the art field.

The exhibition received the support of Le Laboratoire and ReproSolution, Geneva.

# General Idea, *Photographs* (1969–1982) Extended



General Idea, *Photographs* (1969-1982), exhibition view  
Photo: Annik Wetter – MAMCO, Geneva



General Idea, *Photographs* (1969-1982), exhibition view  
Photo: Annik Wetter – MAMCO, Geneva

# Narrative Art

Mac Adams, Bas Jan Ader, Vikki Alexander,  
Gretchen Bender, Jennifer Bolande, Christian Boltanski,  
Victor Burgin, Robert Cumming, Douglas Huebler,  
Peter Hutchinson, Silvia Kolbowski, David Lamelas,  
Urs Lüthi, Dennis Oppenheim, Donna-Lee Phillips,  
Richard Prince, Allen Ruppersberg, Ian Wallace,  
William Wegman

An exhibition organized by Paul Bernard, Lionel Bovier and Julien Fronsacq

**MAMCO's exhibition aims to present Narrative art, an artistic movement that emerged in the early 1970s and which is characterized by the use of photography for documentary purposes or else combined with texts. This analytical approach, linked to the development of Conceptual art in the 1960s, subsequently developed independently to explore narrative forms.**

The term "narrative" itself is polyvalent, ranging from a tale to the presentation of various factual elements, passing by the interpretation of events according to a pre-supposed ideology. The spatial and temporal markers of this movement are as various: it grew up in regions as different as France, Switzerland, Great Britain, Canada, and the USA. The first retrospective devoted to it (*American Narrative/Story Art*, The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston 1978), took place in 1967. The shows *Story* (John Gibson Gallery, New York 1973) and *Narrative Art* (Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels 1974) were decisive milestones. This movement has been commented on several times, as early as 1973, in *Artforum* by the artist James Collins. He highlighted how the artists of this form of expression see reality as a set of fragments to be interpre-

ted, and how they explore the poetic possibilities of the relationships between texts and image, amid a "broadened cultural context that recognizes the viability of a large number of ideologies."

While Narrative art owes to Conceptual art the linguistic exploration of the constitutional side of the photographic medium (seriality, sequence, and duration), it becomes distinct thanks to its work on narrative forms and the development of an "individual mythology"—as cited in the section that Harald Szeemann devoted to it in his *documenta V* in 1972, as "becoming the object of the subject." The panorama of this exhibition closes at the dawn of the 1980s, with the arrival of a new generation of artists who undertook a critique of the depiction and deconstruction of its stereotypes.

## Narrative Art



Christian Boltanski, *Les Habits d'Ariane*, 1977. Group of 16 color photographs, 50 × 50 cm each. Coll. MAMCO, don. AMAM



Silvia Kolbowski, *Model Pleasure V*, 1983. Silver prints. 25,40 × 20,32 cm. Coll. MAMCO, don. AMAM

## *Fictional Artists*

Vern Blosum, Henry Codax, John Dogg,  
Collection Yoon Ja & Paul Devautour, John Saint-Bernard,  
Reena Spaulings, Ernest T, Donelle Woolford

An exhibition organized by David Lemaire

**The exhibition *Fictional Artists* brings together works by artists who remain—more or less hermetically—hidden behind pseudonyms or heteronyms.**

Vern Blosum, the oldest of these personalities, was active on the New York Pop art scene as early as 1961. When his fictional identity was revealed, and even though two of his pieces had already been acquired by MoMA, his work was seen as being an imposture and was thus forgotten for a half a century. And yet, the artist concealed behind Vern Blosum had invented an authorial figure crystallizing the artistic sensitivity of the period and providing, along with a formal irony, an observation of the workings of the art system and the importance of its various agents.

These questions were also examined, two decades later, by the gallerist Colin de Land. In the basement of his space, American Fine Arts, he secretly gave life to two heteronyms: the first, John St. Bernard, explored the figure of the saint in the cinema or popular culture; the other, John Dogg, invented with the complicity of Richard Prince, appropriated the use of ready-mades applied to the world of cars. Meanwhile, Prince, as a central figure of appropriation in the 1980s, was pastiched by Donelle Woolford who overturned the

connotation of *Joke Paintings* by attributing them to a female Afro-American artist and having them produced by her collaborators.

This mix of roles between the gallerist and artist with borrowed names can also be found with Reena Spaulings. This heroine of a novel written collectively in 2004 gave her name to a New York gallery before displaying—in other galleries—works dealing with the relationship between art and the market, such as opening-night tablecloths raised as standards. As for Henry Codax, he was a minor character in the novel *Reena Spaulings* with real artists setting about producing his works.

This exhibition also provides an opportunity to see again the Yoon Ja and Paul Devautour Collection, those “art agents” who invented, produced, promoted, and collected the works of sixteen “artificial artists,” each embodying a possible artistic movement of the 1980-1990s.



Vern Blosum, *Planned anticipation*, 1963. Oil canvas  
170 × 135 cm. Private collection, Switzerland

## Fictional Artists



John St. Bernard, *Saint-Jack*, 1990. Dyptych, aluminium-laminated cybachrome  
223 × 90 cm each. Private collection, long-term loan at MAMCO

# Gordon Matta-Clark, *Food*

An exhibition organized by Sophie Costes

The restaurant "FOOD" opened in New York City in October 1971 at 127 Prince Street, at the corner of Wooster. Thanks to the commitment of Carol Goodden and Gordon Matta-Clark, during the three years of its existence, *FOOD* was a meeting place, providing food and work for artists, and a truly original collective experience. On Sunday evenings, there was the *Special Guest Chef Night*: Rauschenberg served there a Chili of his own invention and the Matta Bones can be included among the legendary dishes of this restaurant, which also highlighted Cajun cooking, and one of his emblematic recipes, the Gombo. "FOOD" was a place for culinary communion, where nourishment became a creative, festive event. Matta-Clark regularly experimented with unusual cooking techniques (*Photo-Fried, Agar-Agar...*) and all the ephemeral events that he organised led to parties, such as the *Brasero* placed on the platform of the *Dumpster Duplex*, the second version of *Open House*, in October 1972.

While this experience brought together around its two founders other figures of the New-York underground (Tina Girouard, Suzanne Harris, Rachel Lew, the members of the anarchitecture group and contribu-

tors to the review *Avalanche...*), the renown of Matta-Clark's work has now crystallised attention around him. It was in particular during the refurbishing of the restaurant that he made his first "cuttings": "One of the first times that I can remember using cuttings as a way to redefine a space was at the restaurant 'FOOD', launched during the first days of SoHo... We put on shows and created a theatre of food. The first version of this space was not practical enough for our needs, when the restaurant became a business. So I had to spend the second summer redesigning the site. I did it by cutting up what had already been constructed and turning it into work spaces. I then attended to the walls and other partitions that divided up the inner space. This was perhaps the last time that I used cutting, the process of cutting-up for practical purposes".

"FOOD" has become an urban legend, with Matta-Clark, for a while, thinking of selling the concept to Léo Castelli.

# Adrian Piper, *The Mythic Being*

An exhibition organized by Elise Lammer

**Adrian Piper (born 1948 in New York, lives and works in Berlin) is a major figure of first-generation American Conceptual art, and a philosopher specialized in analytic philosophy, particularly in the writings of Immanuel Kant.**

Between 1973 and 1975 Piper developed and embodied *The Mythic Being*, a male alter ego who manifested himself during performances, in newspaper ads, drawings, and a series of black and white photographs. Deciding to completely change her appearance, Piper went out to public and private events as a drag, sporting a short curly wig, reflective sunglasses, a moustache, and dark pants. Piper sometimes also adopted a hunched posture and aped masculine movements and behavior in order to conceal her breasts and be more convincing. Each month *The Mythic Being's* experience was shaped by a passage of Piper's journal, that she had kept since 1961. Conceived as a "witness in disguise", as Piper would explain, *The Mythic Being* would repeat and meditate the same entry, like a mantra, until the personal meaning and significance of the sentence would be transcended. During the project Piper placed ads in the gallery section of New York's *Village Voice*. In each advertisement, *The Mythic Being* appeared together with a speech bubble containing the selected mantra. The project was also documented in posters, notably when Piper was invited by Robert Horvitz to lecture at Rhode Island School of Design in 1975, a period during which, in order to maintain her autonomy, she attempted to turn her back to the art world by only producing works that were publicly avail-

able through media distributed widely by using cheap means of reproduction. In his 1973 film, *Other Than Art's Sake*, Australian artist Peter Kennedy documented and interviewed Piper in the only film footage showing her performing *The Mythic Being* in the streets of New York, in which one can fully experience the reaction of her accidental audience.

The series of original black and white photographs show *The Mythic Being* evolving in a more personal and familiar environment, posing with friends or family, subtly revealing the visual and psychological shift between the fictional persona and Piper herself; from external behaviour to internal self-consciousness. In 1975, the last year of the project, the aesthetic and formal characteristics of *The Mythic Being* seemed to become secondary to Piper, and evolved into more static forms of alien confrontation, with series of photographic portraits of the artist, undisguised, aggressively addressing her audience in speech bubbles, thus letting *The Mythic Being* bridge the confrontation of the self and the other.

This exhibition is organized in collaboration with the Adrian Piper Research Archive Foundation Berlin.

# Martha Rosler, *House Beautiful: Bringing the War Home*

An exhibition organized by Sophie Costes

*Bringing the War Home* is a series of 20 photomontages produced between 1967 and 1972 by Martha Rosler, made up of two sections: *In Vietnam* and *House Beautiful*. These photomontages bring together two opposing worlds: modern interiors that convey an image of security and good taste, and scenes from the Vietnam War that focus on the first conflict to be transmitted by television and nicknamed “the living-room war” by the writer Michael Arien, to highlight the intrusion of images of war at the heart of American homes. Martha Rosler appropriated this confrontation, imposed at the time by news broadcasts, by integrating black-and-white images of violence into domestic spaces which are in colour. For the most part, the source images come from the pages of *House Beautiful* and *LIFE Magazine*, two major illustrated periodicals.

During the 1970s, these images were distributed by the alternative and feminist press (such as the *Newspaper for San Diego Women*) or as anti-war flyers, with Martha Rosler taking part in these actions. Feminist artists were particularly mobilised against the Vietnam War, in which they saw a connection between “militarism and patriarchy, war and masculinity”, and the resulting visual strategies that lead to the use of female bodies. It was only in 1991 that she decided to show them in a gallery context to prevent their disappearance.

*Cleaning the Drapes*, for example, shows a woman brandishing a vacuum cleaner, slung over her shoulder, as if it were a microphone, against a trench scene. Above *Pat Nixon*, the wife of President Richard Nixon, who intensified the American presence in Vietnam, there appears a classic oval with the depiction of a female body riddled with bullets. This is the final scene from the film *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967); it is also one of the bloodiest death scenes in the history of the cinema. Neat and groomed, the *First Lady* is immune to the convulsions of this outlaw, even though the same social rules apply to both of them.

Like the highly politicised artists of her generation, Martha Rosler could not remain deaf to the various sorts of conflict that tear apart the world and which art cannot ignore.

# Allen Ruppersberg, *The Never Ending Book.* *Part One: The Old Poems (For My Mother), 2007*

An exhibition organized by Paul Bernard

A pivotal figure of the Californian Conceptual art scene, Allen Ruppersberg (born in 1944 in Cleveland) has, since the end of the 1960s, been pursuing an atypical practice, which favors no medium in particular. The corpus of his works, which the artist describes as "scenes," thus includes installations, performances, multiples, paintings, sculptures, drawings, books, photographs, videos, but also, as of 1969, a bar and a hotel, which prefigure in part the relational aesthetic of the early 1990s.

This heterogeneity provides a glimpse of a working method, based around three main operations: the compulsive collection of popular cultural and "debased" forms (including postcards, calendars, books, comics, educational films, records, etc.); the appropriation of these forms and their displacement into art registers; finally, from one work to another, a partial and fragmentary recycling, as in a permanent work in progress. The result is a series of combinatory plays between texts and images, in which narrative fragments, intertextuality and reminiscence draw up a panorama of the different myths that mould a culture. Ruppersberg insists on the way in which individuals interiorize such tales, saying "we all remain, as social beings, collections."

The installation *The Never Ending Book. Part One: The Old Poems (For My Mother)* is an exemplary instance. On the walls and props, pages taken from his collection are reproduced and laid out randomly. In boxes, this collection is partly presented to the public, who can, in turn, put together their own poems. The work thus brings out the ambiguous relationship between the intimate and the public via a literally infinite book. As Allan McCollum wrote, in a text devoted to Ruppersberg: "There is something paradoxical about our relationships with books: they are publicly produced but privately read and written." There is an autobiographical dimension in Ruppersberg's work; in the pages that make up *The Never Ending Book*, the attentive reader will detect in the background the portrait of a woman. Ruppersberg again: "Look for narrative of any kind narration. Anti-narrative, non-narrative, para-narrative, post-narrative, bad narrative."

# A Collection of Spaces

**MAMCO's fourth floor re-opens after a few weeks of renovation works, in a brand-new configuration gathering artists' spaces. On one hand are artworks which have entered the museum's collection, and on the other, new spaces dedicated to archives and curated in collaboration with artists.**

*Claude Rutault's Inventaire* (1989-1994) gathers the entirety of his definitions/methods, represented by raw canvases, canvases painted in white or painted over in gray, as a way to record their current state of realisation—respectively non-realised, realised, or cancelled. This ensemble, first presented at MAMCO in 1994 and integrated since within the museum's collection, is a form of seismograph of Rutault's practice. It is now re-installed following the artist's wish, and an outside wall allows the update of any of the works.

*Sarkis' L'Atelier depuis 19380*, set up at the MAMCO since 1994, is the only environment which still bears witness to the wooden "cabins" that characterized the museum when it first opened. The artist considers this space as a "travel studio" which, once or twice a year, he occupies to resume his work. What is on display in this space is however not the fabrication of a particular piece, but rather the sedimentation of his work. Some works are thus hung, displaced, sometimes removed, put in dialogue with one another, as if part of a maintenance ritual. Surrounding the studio the presentation of other projects from the artist of which the museum keeps an important number in its collection.

These two historical artists' spaces adjoin rooms dedicated to the Ecart Archives and the Concrete Poetry Cabinet of Maurizio Nannucci and Gabriele Detterer.

The post-Fluxus activities of the Ecart group have found a location for their re-emergence in Geneva, thanks to the HEAD Geneva, the Print Room of the Musée d'art et d'histoire and the complicity of John Armleder. They are exhibited through a new operatory mode which allows at once to resume the archives' inventory work and to update projects from the 1970s. This is the case, for instance, with

a Dick Higgins' score, successively interpreted by the Ecart Group, and today by the museum.

Finally, the *Concrete Poetry Cabinet* is dedicated to an international artistic and literary movement which widespreads from Europe to South America as well as in Asia. As early as the 1950s, artists such as Augusto and Haroldo De Campos, Bob Cobbing, Eugen Gomringer, Jiri Kolar, Ferdinand Kriwet, Robert Lax, Franz Mon, Seiichi Nii-kuni, Dieter Roth, Gerhard Rühm, Emmet Williams, or Henri Chopin, produced poems, books, and sound pieces by using information technologies available at the time (typewriter, Verifax copier, Letraset, offset, etc.). The Cabinet is made of 30'000 artworks and documents brought together by Zona Achives, which under the auspices of Maurizio Nannucci, is one of the biggest private collection on Europe.

This gathering of artists' spaces on the fourth floor of the museum is intended both to offer a representation of the singularity of the MAMCO collections—through the emphasis on protocol, score and collaboration with the artist as nodal points of the collection's politics—, and to allow ephemeral, performative and living forms to find a place in its midst. This articulation between archives, collections, and performative formats is also a proposition which is new for the museographic field and its codified practices.

Sophie Costes, Curator in charge of the MAMCO collections, worked on the re-deployment of Sarkis' studio and, with artist Emilie Parendeau, of Rutault's inventory; Paul Bernard, Curator at the MAMCO, was in charge of the organization of the Concrete Poetry Cabinet; and the Ecart display was organized by Lionel Bovier and David Lemaire, Curator at the MAMCO.

The Concrete Poetry Cabinet and the Ecart space are generously supported by Fondation Leenaards.



# L' Appartement

**The “Apartment” is no ordinary exhibition space. Located on the museum’s third floor, it is a reconstruction of the Paris apartment where, from 1975 to 1991, Ghislain Mollet-Viéville worked to promote Minimal and Conceptual art. Calling himself an “art agent,” Mollet-Viéville initially organized his living and work space to conform with the protocols of the works in his collection, before deciding to yield to the consequences of their “dematerialization” and move to a new apartment with no visible works. This meant his collection could be entrusted to MAMCO when it opened, in 1994. In 2016, the museum has begun to acquire a large part of it.**

This selection of 25 works is representative of the work of the first-generation Minimalist artists such as Carl Andre, Donald Judd, and John McCracken, and of their Conceptual counterparts—Joseph Kosuth, Sol LeWitt, and Lawrence Weiner, for example. If the former explore a lexicon of elementary, logical, and radical forms that keep at bay any anthropomorphism and narrative features, the latter mainly offer protocols for execution, turning the collector into an agent on whom the works’ material existence depends. Both have dispensed with pedestals, frames, lighting, and all other *mise-en-scène* props, in favor of an immediate intellectual and sensory experience.

Compared with MAMCO’s other galleries, the “Apartment” sets the works the challenge of a domestic setting. For visitors this means the opportunity to experience them on more intimate terms, in a space where they are invited to step outside the conventions, whether attending a lecture, a special event, or simply pausing to read and to linger a while in the company of works that have been talking among themselves for several decades now.

# William Leavitt & Bas Jan Ader: *Landslide*

An exhibition organized by Chloë Gouédard

**During the 1960s, *Artforum* became not only an international reference in the milieu of contemporary art, but also the greatest promotor of Minimal and Conceptual art. This American magazine frequently published articles by critics praising the theoretical relevance of this new current, as well as numerous interviews with Robert Morris, Donald Judd, or Sol LeWitt, explaining their approach. At the end of the decade, weary of this intellectualization and glorification, William Leavitt and Bas Jan Ader decided to publish anonymously a satirical Conceptual art magazine entitled *Landslide*.**

Between 1969 and 1970, seven issues were produced on a mimeograph and assembled manually. Leavitt and Ader ridiculed art magazines by inventing fictional artists such as Brian Shitart and Dove Feeler, hare-brained instructions for creating your own "happenings," or announcements for performances that never took place... While the first issues were delightful parodies, their magazine gradually transformed into a space for experimentation, before finally becoming a full-blown conceptual work. When the two artists realised that the contents of *Landslide*, in their own words, "cannibalized their own work," they decided to abandon the publication.

Right from the start of the project, William Leavitt and Bas Jan Ader brought their friend Allen Ruppertsberg into their confidence. Nourished, too, by the Beat Generation

and sharing their interest in magazines and books, he was a logical member of the thirty-odd artists, critics and exhibition curators who received this strange "Quarterly Journal of Underground Art." As a compulsive collector, Ruppertsberg was one of the few "subscribers" to keep a complete set, with the exception of number six which consisted of a hamburger sent in a box stamped "Landslide."

This exhibition also includes publications and ephemera from these three atypical artists whose works are presented in other rooms of the museum. Fascinated by Los Angeles and its entertainment culture, Ader, Leavitt, and Ruppertsberg used strategies inspired by the mass media to produce critical works in which humor and questions of narrativity occupy a preponderant place.

# MAMCO GENEVE

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The Museum is open Tuesday through Friday from noon to 6pm, the first Wednesday of the month until 9pm, and Saturday and Sunday from 11am to 6pm. Closed on Mondays.

Regular admission: CHF 8.–  
Reduced admission: CHF 6.–  
Group admission: CHF 4.–

## Partners

MAMCO is overseen by FONDAMCO, which is made up of Fondation MAMCO, the Canton, and City of Geneva. FONDAMCO would like to thank all its partners, both public and private, and in particular Famille Sandoz as well as Fondation Coromandel, Fondation Lombard Odier, Fondation de bienfaisance du Groupe Pictet, Fondation Casino Barrière de Montreux, Fondation Valeria Rossi di Montelera, Mirabaud, Richemont, and Sotheby's.

The exhibition of William Leavitt benefits from the support of the Fondation du Jubilé de la Mobilière Suisse Société Coopérative and of the Greene Naftali Gallery, New York.

The General Idea's exhibition received the generous support of Le Laboratoire and ReproSolution, Geneva.

MAMCO's fourth floor "A collection of spaces" exhibition would not have been possible without the essential support of Fondation Leenaards.

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